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C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 004555

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR RAISES CONCERNS OVER ALLEGATIONS OF
U.S. FUNDING ANTI-CONSTITUTION CAMPAIGN

REF: NAIROBI 4128

Classified By: POL/C MICHAEL J. FITZPATRICK FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

1. (C) During an October 31 meeting with Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Boaz Mbaya, Ambassador Bellamy raised his concerns about continuing public remarks made by several high-ranking government officials, including a cabinet minister, alleging that the U.S. was in some way funding the "No" campaign opposed to the adoption of the proposed new constitution. In statements made October 29 at campaign rallies supporting the Yes vote on the proposed new constitution, several officials singled out the U.S., Germany, and the U.K. for sharp criticism over their alleged support of the "No" campaign.

2. (C) Ambassador Bellamy expressed his concern -- as he had previously (reftel) -- that these and other previous, similar statements made by high-ranking members of the government at public gatherings (which are associated with the government's agenda) might convey the perception that this is an official position of the government of Kenya. He stated that such statements are unfounded, irresponsible, and complicate the efforts of the U.S. mission in Kenya.

3. (C) Mbaya expressed his understanding for the Ambassador's concerns and assured him that the views expressed by "a few" government officials did not represent the official view of the government of Kenya. The Ambassador thanked him for this assurance but suggested that such a distinction might be lost on the average Kenyan. The Ambassador expressed his desire to see this issue resolved without resort to an official protest and suggested that a statement to correct this possible misperception delivered by a government spokesperson might be very helpful. After encouraging the Ambassador to ignore it, Mbaya replied that he would raise the issue during an internal meeting later that day.
BELLAMY